

Eclipse

By

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Inspired from a True Story

Logline: A young woman receives treatment for her chronic illness, but unfortunate side effects make recovery difficult.

Genre: Magical Realism

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FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

A heart monitor machine beeps a steady beep, beep, beep as an IV bag drip, drip, drips a bag of yellow chemicals into a pale arm.

MADDIE (V.O.)

I never imagined I'd be in here.

Pale, bruised, and blond MADDIE (19, white, sick, quirky), wearing a blue hospital gown, has her arm hooked up to the IV BAG. She's wearing a blood pressure cuff, a finger monitor, and there's a plush blanket draped over her that has an image of a *wolf howling at the moon*.

She reaches for the TV remote.

DAD (O.S.)

I got it Maddie.

DAD (50s, white, exhausted, casual) passes her the remote.

MADDIE

Thanks Dad.

They watch the TV, which plays a Food Network Competition show.

MADDIE (V.O.)

I was dying when I got admitted. The doctors thought I had cancer. Leukemia.

MOM (50s, white, anxious, polished) enters the doorway, holding a book, with two sexy vampires on the cover.

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She hands it to Maddie.

MADDIE

Thanks Mom.

MOM

If you finish it tonight, I'll
go pick up the sequel.

Maddie rubs the book, smiling tiredly at the brooding
vampires on the cover.

MADDIE (V.O.)

Instead, I have a far rarer
disease - aplastic anemia.

Maddie opens the book, looking at an illustration of
a vampire sucking blood from someone's neck.

MADDIE (V.O.)

I like to joke that I'm a
vampire.

Maddie flips another page, blushing at the smutty
drawing.

MADDIE (V.O.)

But instead of drinking blood,
I get blood transfusions.
Well, blood *and* platelets.

Maddie puts the book on her stomach and looks at the
IV bag of yellow chemicals.

DAD (O.S.)

You comfy? Need a heat pack?

MADDIE

Yeah, maybe later.

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INT. INFUSION CENTER - NIGHT

FLASHBACK — MADDIE POV:

A DOCTOR (40s, Black, serious but kind) looks at their clipboard, reading their notes.

DOCTOR

Blah blah, at eight thousand
platelets blah blah blah five
nights in the hospital,
blah blah blah blah immune
compromised, blah blah blah
prednisone, blah blah
transfusions, blah blah blah
steroids, blah blah blah blah
blah-

Maddie lays on the bed in jeans and a fantasy-esque graphic t-shirt, the PICC line in her arm hooked to an IV bag of blood.

Mom and Dad watch from the side of the bed, concerned.

MADDIE (V.O.)

A few days ago, the doctors
decided that I needed to get a
steroid treatment, instead of
a bone marrow transplant.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

PRESENT DAY:

Maddie sits up in the hospital bed, her Mom helping her to get out of it, the IV bag empty and disconnected.

MOM

Need any help?

MADDIE

I got it.

MADDIE (V.O.)

The side effects from the treatment - the aches and the tiredness, I can handle. But what's really killing me...

INT. HOSPITAL BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Maddie looks into the mirror, pulling at her face.

MADDIE (V.O.)

Is the extra hair.

Maddie looks closely at her lips - there's a light, peach fuzz mustache under her nose.

MADDIE (V.O.)

I don't want to sound vain or ungrateful. I know so many patients *lose* their hair.

Maddie puts a leg on the toilet, holding onto the rail.

MADDIE (V.O.)

But why did *my* life saving treatment have to change my body like this?

She pulls her hospital gown up, frowning at the full leg of brown hair there.

MADDIE (V.O.)

My hair used to grow in light, and now it's dark.

Looking in the mirror, Maddie raises an arm up, revealing an armpit full of dark, curly hair.

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MADDIE (V.O.)

And it used to be straight, and
now it's curly.

Maddie puts her arm down and looks at her forearms.
There's bruises and tape residue as well as lots of
hair.

MADDIE (V.O.)

I like to joke that I'm a
vampire but...

MOM (O.S.)

Maddie, are you okay?

Maddie opens the door, walking into her room.

MADDIE

Yeah.

MADDIE (V.O.)

But now I look like a werewolf.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - A FEW NIGHTS LATER

In her bed, Mom tucks the blanket over Maddie, as a
NURSE (30s, Latinx) injects a clear needle into the
IV bag tube and Maddie closes her eyes.

MOM

Last night of treatment. You
can come home tomorrow.

Mom and Dad exit the hospital room as Maddie sleeps.

DAD

Sweet dreams.

MOM (CONT'D)

Love you.

With the lights off, Maddie sleeps, not noticing the
blue glow emanating from her IV bag.

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INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING

Maddie smiles as her PICC line is disconnected from the IV by a nurse.

Mom and Dad beam at her from the door. they hold balloons and a stuffed animal blood cell (like the brand *I Heart Guts*).

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Mom and Dad help Maddie, now in jeans and a sweatshirt, walk up the front lawn pathway.

MADDIE (V.O.)

At first, being home was really hard.

EXT. BACK YARD - NIGHT

Under a full moon, a WOLFLIKE CREATURE flashes red eyes while chomping on a large BONE, saliva dripping from its jowls.

MADDIE (V.O.)

Recovering from treatment isn't simple or easy.

EXT. PARK - CONTINUOUS

The Wolflike Creature runs across the moonlit grass, rabid and chasing wild COYOTES who whimper and run away.

MADDIE (V.O.)

I felt somewhat better, but I was still having symptoms.

Under some trees, the moon illuminates the Wolflike Creature, as it looks up at the sky and howls.

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MADDIE (V.O.)
And even though I got better,
the treatment wasn't a cure.

INT. MADDIE'S BEDROOM - DUSK

Tucked in her bed, Maddie reads the sequel to the vampire book from before.

MADDIE (V.O.)
My energy was at an all-time
low-

Maddie looks at the illustrations of a brooding vampire drinking blood from an artery.

MADDIE (V.O.)
But I didn't need transfusions
of *anything* anymore.

She closes the BOOK. On the cover, the VAMPIRE gestures.

VAMPIRE
My love, just one more chapter-

On her laptop, Maddie types into the Google Search Bar.

MADDIE (V.O.)
And though I wasn't "sick"
anymore...

INT. COMPUTER SCREEN - CONTINUOUS

A Web Page on "The Spoon Theory" spells out what a "Spoonie" is and why *chronically ill people* relate to the theory.

MADDIE (V.O.)
I wasn't well enough to be
"healthy."

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Maddie turns from her computer, looking at her book.

MADDIE (V.O.)

For the moment, I was done
being the world's worst
vampire.

Maddie looks down at her hands, the hair on her
knuckles sticking up.

MADDIE (V.O.)

So maybe I could stop being a
werewolf, too.

INT. BATHROOM - LATER

The mirror fogs and steam rolls out of the shower as
Maddie washes herself inside.

INT. SHOWER - CONTINUOUS

Maddie raises an arm and shaves her armpit with a
razor.

She puts a leg on the edge of the bathtub, then shaves
that too.

She washes the razor under the bathtub faucet, and
the hair floats down the drain.

INT. MADDIE'S BEDROOM - LATER

Maddie rubs lotion onto her legs - hearing a knock
knock.

Mom opens the door, leaning through.

MOM

What are you up to?

Mom sits down next to Maddie. Her arms and legs have
no hair on them. Her peach fuzz mustache is gone.

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MADDIE

I shaved all my hair. *All* of it.

Mom stands across from Maddie, who frowns at her skin.

MADDIE (CONT'D)

But now I'm worried it'll grow back worse.

Mom sits next to Maddie.

MOM

Either way, fuzzy or shaved, you're beautiful. Don't let society pressure you into feeling like a monster, all over a little hair.

She pulls Maddie in for a hug. Maddie laughs.

MADDIE

Ugh, Mooom-

Mom stands and ruffles Maddie's hair.

MOM

You need a haircut.

Maddie lays down and twists a lock of hair around her finger.

MADDIE (V.O.)

Nowadays, my hair still grows really, really fast.

INT. HAIR SALON - DAY - A YEAR LATER

Maddie, now tanner and healthy, sits under a dryer and reads a fantasy novel as her tin-foiled hair dries. She's wearing shorts and her legs are a little fuzzy.

MADDIE (V.O.)

My arm hair is back to normal, but my leg hair grows in pretty dark. I don't care. I don't need to waste precious energy on making myself feel bad over something as natural as hair.

Maddie's hair is washed in a washing station by her HAIRDRESSER (20s, Asian, chic).

MADDIE (V.O.)

I do get some hair on my face still, but waxing once in a while does the trick. It's not something I worry about.

Maddie sits in the salon chair, looking down as her Hairdresser snips off wet locks of hair on the back of her head.

MADDIE (V.O.)

I'm a person with a chronic illness and a side effect of my medication is that it makes my hair and nails grow.

Maddie's hair is dried with a blowdryer - lightening to pink.

HAIRDRESSOR

This is gonna look soooo good!

MADDIE (V.O.)

I've stopped thinking of the symptoms of my illness or medication as a curse. I'm not gonna box myself into the roles I once cast for myself.

The Hairdresser sprays the final mist onto Maddie's hair.

